

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-15, 24-31 and 41 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 10-12, 24 and 31 have been amended, and claims 16-23, 36 and 46-57 have been canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter disclosed therein. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Claims 10-12 and 31 are objected to because of informalities. Claims 10-12 and 31 are amended in order to correct the informalities. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claims 10-12 and 31 is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 4, 10-13, 15, 16, 20-24, 28-31, 36 and 41 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hashimoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,815,201) in view of Shimizu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,223,987); claims 2, 17 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hashimoto in view of Shimizu, and further in view of Saito et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,937,673); claims 3 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hashimoto in view of Shimizu and further in view of Kawakami et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,660,102); and claims 5-9, 18, 19, 26 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hashimoto in view of Shimizu, and further in view of Arai et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,576,758). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

In particular, none of the applied references, either alone or in combination, disclose or suggest an information input apparatus and associated method that includes at least an imaging device that captures an object image and forms digital images of a subject, a release switch that initiates a process of capturing the object image when a user operates the release switch, and a sound effect output device that outputs a preset non-mechanical sound effect that signifies initiating the capturing process by said imaging device when the release switch is operated, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claim 24.

Specifically, Hashimoto teaches an electronic camera for connection to an external device such as a personal computer, and a camera that captures both images and audio which are associated with the images (Abstract).

Shimizu teaches a sound-making element in a camera that is provided to produce warning signals or confirming signals for the operation of a self-timer (Abstract).

Saito teaches a camera that has a video camera unit to shoot a movie picture and a still camera unit to shoot a still picture so as to allow movie and still pictures to be taken simultaneously (Abstract).

Kawakami teaches an electronic camera for shooting an object to store a still picture of the object in a first rotary magnetic recording medium in the form of video signals that includes a driving device and a recording device (Abstract).

Arai teaches a digital electric still camera with a CCD image sensor and a memory card for recording digital image data of picture frames photographed by the CCD image sensor (Abstract).

Accordingly, Hashimoto discloses a digital camera that records a video image and sound data that are transmitted together to an outer device, but is not concerned with outputting a sound. Especially, Hashimoto is not concerned by any sound or noise during the recording period.

Moreover, Shimizu teaches outputting a sound for warning, but only during the pre-photographing operation, light sensing, or self-timer operation. The camera in Shimizu is a film camera, and hence it outputs the sound of a mechanical release, not a sound effect, as recited in the claims.

Also, neither Saito, Kawakami nor Arai cure deficiencies in Hashimoto and Shimizu in disclosing or rendering obvious the features of independent claims 1 and 24. Accordingly, it would not have been obvious to combine these references to arrive at the current invention.

Because a combination of the references would not have resulted in an information input apparatus and associated method that includes an imaging device that captures an object image and forms a digital image, a release switch that initiates a process of capturing the object image, a sound

effect that signifies initiating the capturing process by the imaging device, it would not have been obvious to combine the applied references to arrive at the current invention. Thus, independent claims 1 and 24, and their dependent claims, are patentable over a combination of the applied references. As such, withdrawal of the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-15, 24-31 and 41 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time  
Request for Continued Examination

Date: November 19, 2004

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